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INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 8386  
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 9615

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS, TAIWAN-JAPAN  
DISPUTE

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused June 19 news coverage on new developments in cross-Straits relations; on speculations over the personnel reshuffle at the Control Yuan and the Examination Yuan; and on a major downsizing of the "China Times," one of the four largest Chinese-language dailies in Taiwan. The pro-independence "Liberty Times" ran a banner headline on page three reading "Green [DPP] Camp: [President] Ma's [Proposal to] Shelf Arms Procurements Has Aroused Grave Concerns from Washington."

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an editorial in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" called on the Taiwan public to watch out for President Ma Ying-jeou's political tricks to push Taiwan toward China. An editorial in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" lambasted President Ma for compromising Taiwan's sovereignty by giving in over his official title of "President" just to please Beijing. Former AIT Chairman Richard Bush opined in the "Taipei Times" that only when Taiwan and China share a common goal of stabilization can cross-Straits relations become more predictable. An op-ed in the pro-unification "United Daily News" discussed the recent dispute between Taiwan and Japan over the Tiaoyutai Islands and said improved cross-Straits relations are the main reason prompting Japan to adopt a softened tone in the dispute. End summary.

### ¶3. Cross-Straits Relations

A) "Exposing 'Mr. Ma's' Political Tricks of Pushing Taiwan toward China"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 720,000] editorialized (6/19):

"... In reality, the ultimate purpose of Ma Ying-jeou's attempt to associate Taiwan with the Republic of China is simply to link Taiwan with China, namely, [to push for Taiwan's] ultimate unification [with China]. This is why he has accepted the 'one China' consensus regardless of all the consequences. The 23 million people who have the right over Taiwan's sovereignty must see through [Ma's] political tricks, with which he attempts to 'eliminate Taiwan's sovereignty' and then 'sinify' the island."

B) "You're the President, Act Like One"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (6/19):

"... On Tuesday, in response to media queries on how he would address China's Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait Chairman Chen Yunlin if the two meet when Chen visits Taiwan later this year, Ma said: 'I would address him as Mr. Chen and he could address me as Mr. Ma. I think that's the best way.' Ma added that as long as both sides are on equal footing, there should be no reason to believe that the nation's sovereignty would be slighted."

It is nothing less than shocking to see how easily Ma would compromise himself and his title - an honor bestowed upon him by 7,658,724 voters - to please Beijing.

"According to Ma's logic, his approach is the best way to avoid 'controversy.' But if doing so involves giving up one's official title in one's own country, what else can Taiwanese expect from the president when he travels abroad? ... A president represents a country's sovereignty. If Ma cannot understand that and if he cannot act in a manner commensurate with his title, then he is unworthy of the position."

#### C) "The Balancing Act across the Strait"

Richard Bush, former AIT chairman and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (6/19):

"... The two sides are off to a good start, but it is only a start. At this early stage, the two sides should be pleased with their initial achievements, but they should remember that they have embarked on a long and complicated process of re-engagement. Expectations are high and pitfalls exist. The recent experience of South Korean President Lee Myung-bak demonstrates what happens when a leader ignores pitfalls and cannot meet expectations. ... If the two sides are to reduce mistrust and increase mutual understanding, it will occur not through some 'grand bargain,' but as a result of a gradual, step-by-step process where each side's initiatives do not entail substantial risk and the other's positive response encourages momentum.

"The current interactive process will also succeed if Beijing and Taipei agree, at least informally, on what the goal is. Having an objective gives the two sides focus and a sense of purpose. On

democratic Taiwan, the existence of a goal gives the public a benchmark with which to evaluate the performance of the Ma administration. Every time the two sides successfully take a step toward that objective, they gain more confidence that more can be achieved. ... But it appears the two sides have identified another goal worth striving for. My own term for this goal is 'stabilization' - that is, the creation of an environment for cross-strait relations that allows the two sides to coexist without mutual fear. Stabilization begins with each side's declaratory reassurance that it does not intend to challenge the fundamental interests of the other. ... If fully realized through an incremental process, stabilization will make cross-strait relations more predictable and will significantly reduce mutual fear. ..."

#### 4. Taiwan-Japan Dispute

"[Taiwan] Joining Hands with Japan to Counter China? Japan Has Yielded to the Situation"

Hsu Chieh-lin, head of the Japan Research Institute in Taiwan, opined in the pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] (6/19):

"... There are three cunning schemes behind Japan's occupation of the Tiaoyutai Islands: First, it manipulates the United States to be its accomplice. Second, it takes advantage of international law as a cover-up. Third, it benefits from the conflict between Taiwan and China without any effort. Now the situation across the Taiwan Strait has changed dramatically. First, the United States has said that it does not want to get involved in the controversy over the sovereignty of the Tiaoyutai Islands. Second, Japan's claim of 'occupation' [over the disputed islands] is groundless in terms of international law. Third, both sides of the Strait are entering a honeymoon period of integration at the moment, so it is difficult for Japan to obtain any benefits now. Why did Japan soften its tone this time? This is worth pondering. ..."

YOUNG